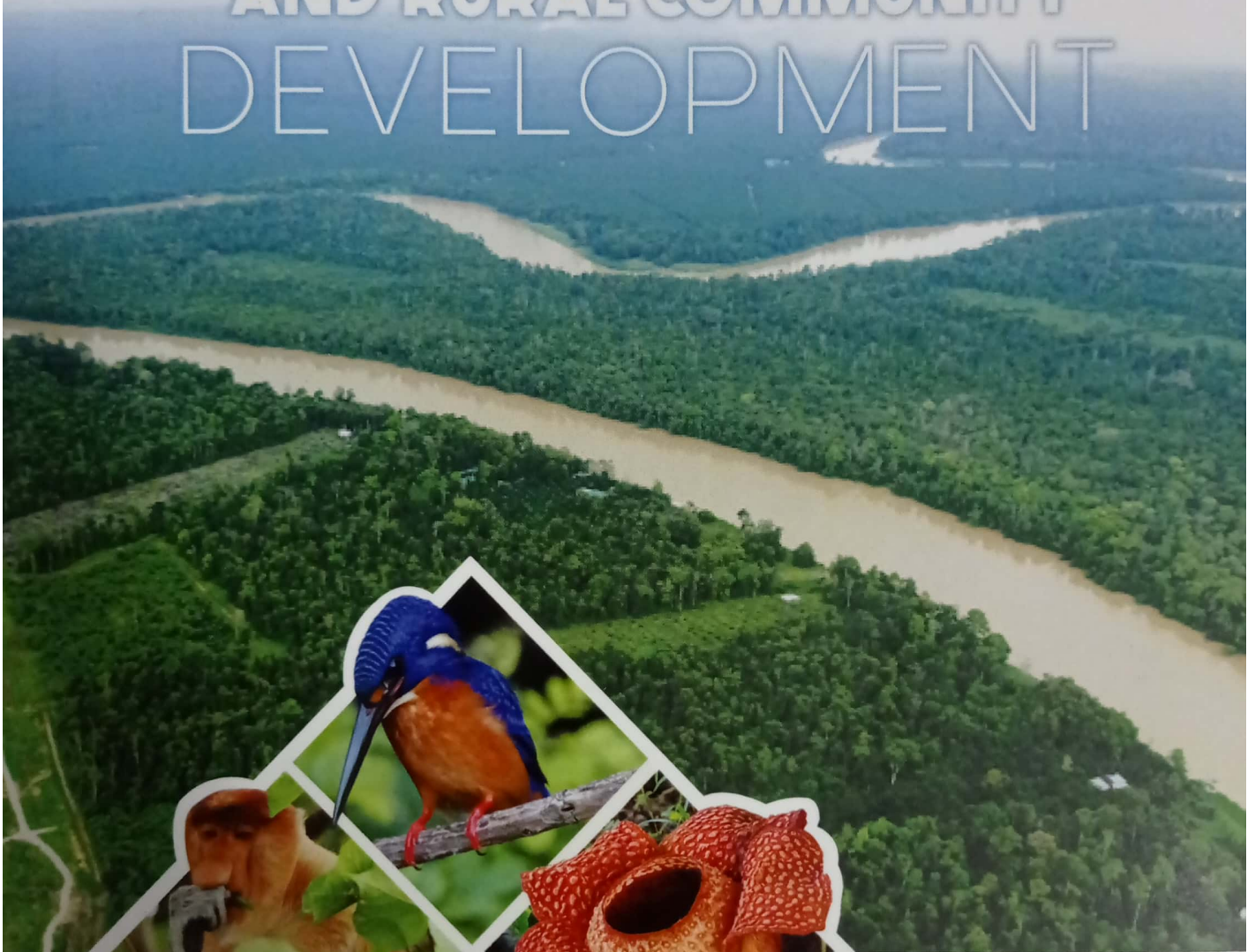


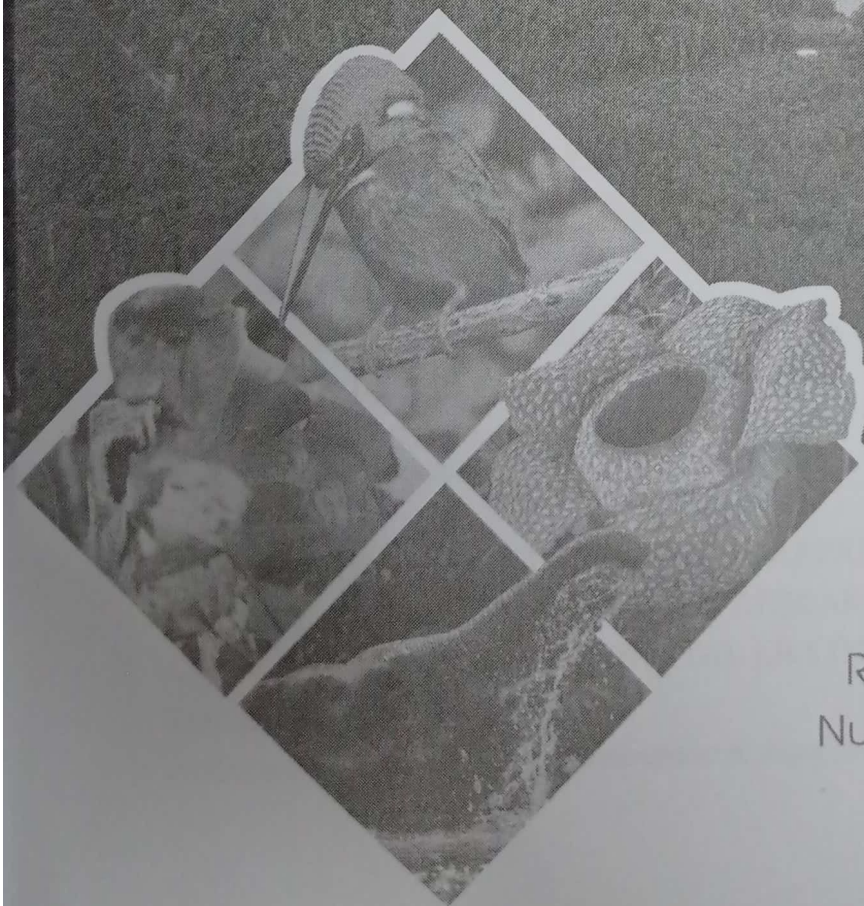
# ECOTOURISM

## AND RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Editors :  
Velan Kunjuraman  
Roslizawati Che Aziz  
Nurzehan Abu Bakar

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## CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION TO ECOTOURISM AND RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

*VELAN KUNJURAMAN, ROSLIZAWATI CHE AZIZ  
& NURZEHAN ABU BAKAR*

Ecotourism at present is acknowledged as a 'vehicle' for development. A substantial amount of previous studies on ecotourism have validated such fact. Many developing countries have utilized ecotourism as a development agenda in their national plans due to the benefits delivered by it. Realizing its potential as a rural and community development tool, many researchers around the world are keen to document how ecotourism contributes to rural community development in their respective countries. With this in mind, this book gathered some empirical findings on related issues regarding ecotourism and rural community development from scholars representing different countries to provide unique interpretations and different perspectives and styles. Accordingly, this book is divided into two sections. The first section represents ecotourism findings based on the Malaysian context. The second section demonstrates the findings and interpretations of ecotourism impacts outside of Malaysia. It is our hope that the organization and structure of the book will ease our readers in understanding the content of the book.

There are only five research related to rural tourism, ecotourism and rural community development issues that have been done by scholars from Malaysia. With the infancy of studies related to ecotourism and rural community development in Malaysia, these studies enrich the value of ecotourism as a local rural community development tool and enhances the current body of knowledge. Ecotourism researchers, especially postgraduate students, are required to choose a research paradigm as their world view to guide the research. However, understanding the basic philosophy of research paradigms is often perceived as a difficult task. With this mind, in Chapter 2, Velan Kunjuraman has made the effort to explain the basic concepts of research paradigms using available literature. He also emphasizes that research paradigms are important in academic research, especially in ecotourism